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One Hundred Fifteenth Congress  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Foreign Affairs  
2170 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515  
[www.foreignaffairs.house.gov](http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov)

March 16, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Speaker:

We write to express our outrage at the Trump Administration's plan to make a draconian cut of nearly one-third to the Fiscal Year 2018 international affairs budget. This massive reduction will undermine our diplomatic efforts and make the American people less safe. With instability and turmoil on the rise around the world, we urge you to ensure that the House of Representatives does not consider any legislation which would slash the international affairs budget.

Our diplomats settle disputes so that they do not have to be settled with bombs and bullets. And our development initiatives help countries lift themselves up, because areas mired in poverty often become hotbeds for instability and violence. The men and women in our armed services bravely put their lives on the line to protect our country. We owe it to them to exhaust every possible option before we send them into harm's way. If we slash our investment in diplomacy and development, we are telling our servicemembers – and the American people – that we will take our chances down the road, even if that comes at a much higher cost in blood and treasure.

But, don't just take our word for it. In 2013, Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis said, "If you don't fund the State Department fully, then I need to buy more ammunition ultimately. So I think it's a cost benefit ratio. The more that we put into the State Department's diplomacy, hopefully the less we have to put into a military budget as we deal with the outcome of an apparent American withdrawal from the international scene."

And as you know, on February 27<sup>th</sup>, more than 120 retired three-star and four-star generals sent you a letter urging Congress to "ensure that resources for the International Affairs Budget keep pace with the growing global threats and opportunities we face," and noting that "Now is not the time to retreat."

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Today's budget request will send a chilling shock wave across the globe. And those shock waves will come back on us. The diseases we don't prevent will reach our shores. The conflicts we don't help resolve will grow into the wars we need to fight. The places where we fail to plant the seeds of friendship today may tomorrow become fertile ground for violence and hatred for America.

Congress is a co-equal branch of government with the power of the purse. We urge you to use this power to stop the White House from making these extremely dangerous and short-sighted cuts to the international affairs budget.

Sincerely,



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Ranking Member  
House Foreign Affairs Committee



BRAD SHERMAN  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific



GREGORY W. MEEKS  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and  
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ALBIO SIRES  
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Subcommittee on the Western  
Hemisphere



GERALD E. CONNOLLY  
Member of Congress



TED DEUTCH  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on the Middle East and  
North Africa



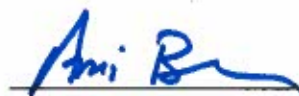
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